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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

VE Day Ceremonies Mark 60 Years of Freedom - Sabah
Bush 'Expects' Erdogan in Washington - Milliyet
Erdogan Meets Annan, Papadopoulos in Moscow - Hurriyet
EU Ambassadors Urge Gul Not to Fan Nationalism - Sabah
US Forces Chase Foreign Fighters in Iraq - Aksam
Sharon Postpones Gaza Withdrawal to Mid-August - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

World Celebrates WW II Victory - Cumhuriyet
Grand Meeting in Moscow - Radikal
Bush Renews Invitation for Erdogan to Washington - Yeni
Safak
Georgia Gives Bush a Joyous Welcome - Zaman
Jafari Government Takes 'Federal' Oath - Radikal
Iran to Partially Relaunch Nuclear Program - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Bush-Erdogan to Meet in June: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan joined more than 50 world leaders in Moscow on Monday to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II. Erdogan had a brief chance to meet President Bush following the ceremonies at Red Square. The US President said he expected Erdogan in Washington soon, papers report. On his return home, Erdogan said he will meet President Bush in Washington during the first half of June. The private news channel NTV reported from Washington this morning that the meeting will take place at the White House on June 8.

Commentary Sees Ongoing Tension in Turkey-US Ties: A commentary in the mass-appeal "Hurriyet" claims that the strain in Turkey-US ties has not yet been relieved. The columnist Fatih Altayli writes that Washington has not yet forgotten the strong criticism of US policies by Prime Minister Erdogan, and the fact that Erdogan kept Ambassador Edelman waiting for six weeks before granting him a meeting. The commentary expects that Erdogan will be given a meeting with Bush in mid-June, so that Erdogan will have to travel to the US twice - once to attend the graduation ceremony of his daughter at California University, and a second time to meet with the President. Altayli writes that Ukrainian President Yushchenko is due to visit Turkey in mid-June, which may conflict with a Bush-Erdogan meeting in Washington. He asserts that Washington, in a deliberate effort to 'show Turkey that it is not the center of the world,' will delay sending a new Ambassador to replace Ambassador Edelman until the fall.

Gul Meets EU Ambassadors: On Monday, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul hosted a luncheon for the ambassadors of European Union countries in Turkey. Gul told the EU envoys that a negative outcome of the French referendum on the EU Constitution should not affect Turkey's EU membership process. He noted that Turkey is ready to expand its customs agreement with the EU in a way that will include new member states, including Cyprus. The EU ambassadors conveyed to Gul their concerns about the Turkish government's anti-EU statements. They noted especially a statement by PM Erdogan that some in the EU are trying to 'divide' Turkey. The EU deems such remarks as 'unacceptable.' The envoys also expressed concern about rising nationalism in Turkey.

CESS Report Recommends That TGS Be Under Defense Ministry: The Center for European Security Studies (CESS) and Turkey's Center for Eurasian Strategic Studies (ASAM) have formed a working group to prepare a report on military-civilian ties in Turkey. The report will be used as a reference point for discussions between Turkey and the EU, "Milliyet" reports. On April 28, ASAM withdrew from the working group in protest

after CESS recommended in the report to put the Turkish General Staff (TGS) under the control of the Turkish Defense Ministry. Such an arrangement is commonplace in EU member countries. CESS noted that Turkey must abide by EU rules and practices if it hopes to join the European Union.

PUK: Turkey Supports a Federal Iraq: The Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Washington Representative Kubad Talabani told the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) May 5 that Prime Minister Erdogan, in a letter to the Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, expressed Turkey's support for a federal structure in Iraq. Kubad, who is the son of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, said the Kurds have done all they can to ease Turkey's concerns about possible Kurdish independence. Kubad said Ankara realized that Iraq could remain unstable in coming years, and that a 'buffer zone' between the two countries would be to Turkey's benefit.

Turkish Popular Support for EU Diminishes: A monthly opinion poll conducted by the ANAR research company for the ruling AK Party shows that Turkish popular support for EU membership has dropped to 63 percent from the previous level of 70 percent, "Sabah" reports. The poll was conducted among 3,300 Turks in major Turkish provinces during the first week in April. While rising nationalism in Turkey has apparently diminished support for the EU, it has also boosted the potential votes for pro-Kurdish DEHAP and the extreme nationalist MHP, the report claims. The distribution of votes among political parties in a hypothetical general election is as follows: AKP 46.6 percent, CHP 14.3, MHP 9.6, DYP 9.2, DEHAP 6.3, and ANAP 4.5. 22 percent of respondents view Erdogan as the most trusted political leader in Turkey, followed by President Sezer at 6.3 percent, according to the poll.

Gul to Visit Romania, Ukraine, Crimea: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul left for Bucharest, Romania on Monday to attend the 8th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). Following the summit, Gul will proceed to Ukraine on May 11 to lay the groundwork for the upcoming meeting of President Sezer with his Ukrainian counterpart in Kiev in June.

Dervis Resigns to Take Over UNDP Post: Former Turkish economy minister Kemal Dervis resigned from his post in parliament as a deputy from the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) in order to take up his new position as head of the UN Development Program (UNDP). Dervis will begin his UN posting in August 2005.

Baghdad-Istanbul Flights to Resume: Turkey has decided to allow Iraqi flights into Istanbul after a 15-year hiatus, "Yeni Safak" reports. Iraqi Airlines will reportedly fly from Baghdad to Istanbul five times a week.

EDITORIAL OPINION: VE Day; President Bush in Georgia

"Democracy is the New Weapon"

Emin Pazarcı wrote in the conservative "DB Tercuman" (5/10): "The US has adopted democracy as a weapon and has started using it in every international circumstance. NGOs will be the tool for achieving this goal. The US plans to support and finance NGOs and allow them to manipulate public opinion. The US hopes and believes that its interests will be served by using the 'democracy weapon.' Cyprus has been one example of this process. The non-governmental organizations played a determining role in the outcome of the Turkish Cypriot elections. A similar process took place in Ukraine and Georgia. . The US is now preoccupied with Russia. Growing Russian control over Eurasian energy resources is a matter of immediate concern for Washington. So Bush has launched a campaign against Moscow by questioning the nature of Russian democracy. The Russian leader is very aware of the next step, and is therefore reacting harshly to Bush's remarks. . But there is one thing that is odd about all of this: nobody is questioning American democracy or raising the obvious contradictions such as the continued use of the death penalty in the United States and the Americans' propensity to collaborate with dictators."

"The Debate On Freedom"

Smi Kohen commented in the mainstream "Milliyet" (5/10): "The VE Day celebrations demonstrated friendship between the old winners and losers, but they also highlighted differences between friends of today. The celebrations included a debate about facing up to history, which predictably led to tension between Russia, Europe, and the US over the Baltic states. Russia wants to distance itself from the historical responsibilities of the Soviet Union. Putin thinks that a one-time apology is good enough. But the current debate is more about the future than the past. The differences stem from policies for the future. In fact, the architect of this debate is President Bush. His speeches, both in Latvia and the Netherlands, set forth a doctrine of democracy and freedom. Bush not only expressed

support for democracy, but also named a number of countries that need to go through the democratization process. Bush believes that the time has now come for countries like Belarus and Moldova. The US is urging Moscow not to be afraid of democratization in neighboring countries. But the Russian leadership is expressing its discontent, effectively telling the United States to mind its own business. This debate looks like it could be a source for new conflicts around the world. It may not lead to the development of new and opposing 'blocs,' but it certainly has the potential to create new tensions and disputes."

"Bush in Georgia"

Fikret Ertan commented in the Islamist-intellectual "Zaman" (5/10): "Georgia's capital Tbilisi is going to host a very important and special guest today. Of course, this guest is US President George W. Bush. This is the first-ever visit by a US President to Tbilisi. The people of that city have been preparing for this important visit for a long time. They will no doubt crowd the 'Independence Center' today to listen to Bush's speech on democracy and freedom with great excitement. With this visit, President Bush will try to improve and strengthen relations between two countries that have been moving closer together for the past ten years. Bilateral relations between the US and Georgia have been growing in three areas: military, economic, and politics. Bilateral military relations are definitely ahead of the political and economic dimensions, but President Bush's historic visit highlights Georgia's growing importance for the US, and its position as the Americans' closest friend and ally in the Caucasus."

EDELMAN